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# THE CANADIAN RAILROADER

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## Though Christmas Comes But Once a Year Its Spirit Always Should Be Here



*The cynic has a few strong shots in his locker for Christmas. But he misses some important particulars. For instance, it is a time when most children are particularly remembered in an unselfish way. It is a time when the weak and the needy are more thought of than at other times. It is a time when there is, generally, a more thoughtful and more kindly spirit abroad. It is a time with defects and inconsistencies, yet a time, also, with unusual virtues. If its unusual virtues could be maintained for all the other days of the year, this would be a much more pleasant world to live in. A Merry Christmas, and may the Christmas spirit live amongst all of us not only to-day and to-morrow, but next day and the days thereafter, till Christmas Eve comes round again.*

KENNEDY CRONE

presi-





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## Swiss Adopting Social Reforms

Following Last Year's General Strike Country Passed Proportional Representation and an Eight-Hour Working Day.

Berne, Switzerland.

**L**AST year, in November, a wave of revolution threatened to engulf Switzerland. A universal strike broke out which kept the country in suspense for some days. Even the railwaymen and postal officials stopped work. The government, however, kept calm and refused absolutely to enter into negotiations with the men's leaders while at the same time it announced its perfect willingness to introduce any necessary reforms, political and social.

After the capitulation of the revolutionary elements the federal council stood by its promise. The most important of political reforms, the introduction of the proportional system of electing the People's Chamber, was put into force. The most important industrial reform, the eight-hour day, followed, and quite recently, on October 31, this was succeeded by a popular vote confirming the parliamentary adoption of the eight-hour day for all workers in the railway, postal, telegraph and telephone services.

The new law referring to this reform had been unanimously passed by both houses of the Legislature; however, more than 30,000 Swiss electors having demanded that it should be submitted to a referendum, it could not be put into force immediately. During the three months preceding the referendum an unusually violent controversy raged throughout the country. Again it was proved that the unanimous adoption of a bill by the Swiss chambers does not always convey the opinion of the nation. Six months ago, a new labor law was even rejected outright by the electorate, although it had been unanimously voted by Parliament. This time the decision of Parliament was confirmed, but by only 57 per cent., which is less than three-fifths of the votes cast.

### A 48-Hour Week.

To these arguments the author of the bill successfully put forward the following argument at a meeting of the Bernese Liberal Party: "The time is past for the employers to fix wages and working hours ad libitum, without taking into consideration the wants and wishes of Labor. Nowadays the workers desire to have their say, and they claim a working week of 48 hours, or less, precisely as a proof of their right of self-determination. We may, or we may not, approve of this modern spirit; but it would be foolhardy and in vain to deny its existence. It is not impossible that in course of time Labor itself will be inclined toward longer hours, but at present it is no business of ours to fight the eight-hour day."

If the referendum on the industrial eight-hour day had taken place now instead of last year, probably the dislike to a reduction of the

working time would have caused the rejection of that measure. As it is, justice demanded that the transport workers should not be left in a position more unfavorable than that of the factory hands. Moreover, the eight-hour day had already been put into practice for the railway, post office, telegraph and telephone employees, and thus the new law meant only the legal confirmation of a fait accompli.

### Opinions Divided.

Anyone who reads the discussions on the subject in the Swiss press, and does not know how independent the Swiss citizen is in forming his own opinion, could hardly believe in the uncertainty of the bill's fate up to the last moment. Like all the members of the legislature, all the political daily newspapers of the country—From the Communist Zurich "Volksrecht" to the Conservative "Journal de Geneve"—supported the law. As a rule, the "Journal de Geneve" dislikes the uniformed and centralized handling of things by the Federal Council, and is generally very sceptical about social reforms; still, it hailed the bill with enthusiasm—partly because the Washington Labor Conference, an outcome of the League of Nations, had created an international convention introducing the eight-hour day in factories, trades, and means of communication. For the same reason other Swiss friends of the League of Nations went in for the new working-time bill. The leaders of the radical party of the Canton de Neuchatel declared in a public appeal: "This law is a confirmation of a principle proclaimed in the Covenant which the Swiss people has signed with pleasure."

The fate of the bill was regarded with anxiety. The majority of the peasants disliked it because of its pretended advancement of "idleness," while large numbers of middle-class citizens voted against it out of inherent opposition to social reforms. Many others rejected it as a measure when the necessity of an increase in production was so important. Ultimately, the law was adopted by a majority of about 100,000 votes, 369,000 being in favor and 271,000 against, and by 13 cantons as against nine. Seeing, however, that in the cantons of Berne and Lucerne, with their large labor population, only 54 and 51 per cent., respectively, of the voters declared in favor of the law, anxiety as to the fate of the bill appears to have been well-founded.

The bourgeois press hailed the result with great satisfaction, more especially as a means of promoting social class conciliation. But precisely for this very same reason the satisfaction of the Socialist press was far from being unmixed; although this part of the political press had unanimously recommended the law, some of its organs said that a rejection, too, would not have been

without advantage, "for it would have accelerated the advent of revolution."

### Number of Hours Limited.

The new law fixes the working day for the staff of the postal, telegraph, telephones and railway services at eight hours. But it is reasonably flexible in special circumstances. For instance, persons employed at small postoffices or railway stations ought to work nine hours, because plenty of leisure makes their work easier. Where work is heavier, employees are free to work overtime, but not over 150 hours per year; and they are entitled to an additional wage of 25 per cent. Besides some provisions concerning night work and shift work, the law contains regulations about days of rest and annual holidays. There are to be 56 days of rest per year, at least 20 of which ought to coincide with Sundays and general holidays. In additions, every employee must be granted between

7 and 28 days annual vacation, according to age and years of service. From the age of 50 an annual leave of 28 days becomes obligatory for everybody.

Seeing that the best judges of Europe's present economic and financial situation consider increased production to be the sovereign remedy for the evils besetting the world, it is no wonder that the law in question met with vehement opposition more especially on the part of the middle classes and peasantry. The opponents' chief argument was in the effect that the Swiss ought to show to the world their earnest willingness to do organized work and to set an example in the prevailing and increasing tendency toward shortening hours devoted to work. Last it is argued, when the eight-hour day was introduced, the opposition kept silent, because people had not yet fully grasped the gravity of the economic situation.



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## Dominion Will Contribute Share For Unemployed

Senator Robertson Announces Government Policy in Emergency Cases

THE unemployment policy of the Dominion Government was announced on December 15. The gist of the announcement is:

A situation should be met to the possible extent by providing instead of relief, but should any relief measures become necessary by reason of utterly unrelieved shortage, the Federal Government will be willing to co-operate on the following basis: "The criterion for determining where relief should go and for distributing the same shall be provided by the municipal authorities, and in each case where relief is given and as relief is continued a certificate must be obtained from the Government employment service, showing that the applicant cannot be given employment. The general system and details, and the safeguards adopted, must be approved by or on behalf of the Federal Government."

"If this is done the Federal Government is willing to contribute in places where relief on any substantial scale appears to be necessary, one-third of the amount actually disbursed on this relief, provided the other two-thirds is either paid by the municipality or paid by the municipality and the province jointly."

The announcement of the Government policy is embodied in a letter addressed by Senator Robertson, Federal Minister of Labor, to Hon. Walter Rollo, Minister of Labor for Ontario. A copy of the letter was handed to C. G. MacNeil, Dominion secretary-treasurer of the G.W.V.A., as indicating "the Federal Government's attitude toward and policy in connection with unemployment."

### Senator Robertson's Letter.

The text of Senator Robertson's communication to Mr. Rollo is as follows:

Dear Mr. Rollo:

I beg to refer to our conversation of last week respecting unemployment. The views I then expressed have been since submitted to my colleagues of the Federal Government and have been approved. I communicate with you for the purpose of placing them in written form.

The situation should be met to the utmost possible extent by the provision of work instead of the provision of relief. In this respect the Federal Government is doing and will continue to do the utmost within its power.

In cooperation with the authorities of the municipalities, the Federal Government will, through our representatives, do all that is possible to meet the situation.

This will give employment to something like four hundred men, who, so far as practicable, shall be taken from the city. It has also been decided to continue the Welland Canal construction work throughout the winter. The furtherance of other projects as well is under consideration.

The Government has taken up with large employers of labor the great desirability of doing everything within their power to aid, and I am glad to see evidences of the success of our efforts. The manufacturers in Toronto have, I believe, adopted as a general policy the practice of reducing working time instead of reducing staffs. I feel sure the provincial and municipal authorities will join in to provide a substantial amount of employment and in this way the situation should be materially relieved. Every possible effort should be made to avoid the necessity of any other form of relief.

Should, however, emergency relief measures become necessary by reason of utterly unavoidable shortage of employment, the Federal Government is willing to co-operate on the following basis:

### Basis of Relief.

The organization for determining where relief must go and for distributing the same shall be provided by the municipal authorities and in each case before relief is given and as relief is continued a certificate must be obtained from the Government is willing to contribute in places where relief on any substantial scale appears to be necessary, one-third of the amount actually disbursed on this relief, provided the other two-thirds is either paid by the municipality or paid by the municipality and the province jointly.

In this connection I may again emphasize what I stated to you personally, that in normal times those problems are dealt with wholly locally. The Government of Canada, however, under present circumstances feels justified in co-operating to the extent set out above. It is in some degree correct that the numbers of the unemployed at the present time are increased by reason of the general contraction in industrial activity following upon a period of abnormal prices during the war.

Under extraordinary circumstances the Federal Government has co-operated as well at other times in the provision of relief, notably in respect to those in need on account of drought conditions in portions of western Canada. In such cases, of course, the local authorities have joined in the sharing of the burden.

The above is necessarily, as you can understand, a statement of general policy.

(Signed) G. B. ROBERTSON,  
Minister of Labor.

### MUNSEY WOULD CUT HEART OUT OF UNIONS.

At a dinner celebrating his purchase of the Baltimore "American" and "Star," Frank A. Munsey, owner of magazines, newspapers and a big block of United States Steel Corporation stock, devoted more than an hour of his speech to an attack upon organized labor. He suggested that the tariff and other issues be disregarded and that a coalition of business interests be formed to destroy organized labor, "as a surgeon would cut deep to remove the malignant roots of a cancer."

Among those who heard this bitter tirade was Henry F. Broening, president of the Baltimore Federation of Labor, who at the last meet-

ing of the Federation took Munsey sharply to task for repaying the loyalty of his workers with the coin of ingratitude. He charged the publisher with being unfair to labor, and suggested that he might better serve the public if he would use the resources of his publications "to find out the truth about labor organizations and then let the readers be the judge."

### LOST AND FOUND.

"Look at the lost ball I found on the links, daddy," said Bobbie.

But daddy was suspicious. "Ahe you sure it was a lost ball, son?" he asked.

"Surest thing you know," replied Bobby with conviction. "I saw the man and his caddy both looking for it."



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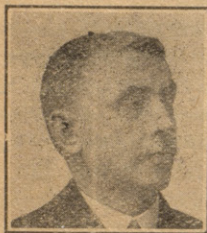
# Professional Workers Must Have Better Standard of Living

(From our own correspondent)

Glasgow.

AS I indicated in my last article the professional workers are in revolt. The fact has been forced upon them that their only hope lies in combination. In proof of this I desire this week to tell you something about the Architects' and Surveyors' Assistants' Professional Union. Its short history and its objects speak volumes for the interest and determination of those who have led the movement.

This Union was founded last year to meet a long felt want in the allied professions of architecture and surveying and in the building industry. Architects, surveyors, quantity surveyors, not in practice for themselves, and designers, technical experts and assistants in the various branches of the great Building Industry, have been too long exploited by government departments, local governing bodies, industrial concerns and, it must be sadly admitted, by many of their more fortunate professional brothers in practice. A few bold spirits felt it high time for their state of affairs to cease. They founded this union and, though not relaxing in any way the code of etiquette due from one professional man to another, threw open the membership to all those in the building industry whose employment demanded a high level of artistic, technical or scientific knowledge, and who are engaged on the office staffs of the industry, thus forming a strong craft fellowship of all those employed workers who design, survey, measure or control building. The Union is not concerned particularly with architecture as an art or a profession. It desires to raise the general standard of the design, construction and craft detail of building, and to ensure to the worker who produces these a standard of living compatible with his technical acquirements and skill.



James Gibson

The objects are worth noting:—

1. To provide a common organization for salaried architects, surveyors, quantity surveyors and technical assistants, and to protect their individual interests.
2. To watch over and secure efficient training of its members.
3. To abolish unpaid and underpaid assistance, to establish a minimum wage and proportion-

ate upward minimum rates, and to establish proper payment for over-time.

4. To secure "open" references to assistants.
5. To form an up-to-date employment bureau.
6. To assist members, where necessary and possible, in the execution of their private commissions and in commencing practice.
7. To assure the direct representation of its members on the governing councils of all professional bodies and to encourage co-operation with them and practising architects and surveyors.
8. To provide opportunities for social and professional intercourse.

The union aims at a 100 per cent. membership. It has been founded little more than a year and it has already gone a long way to achieve this. It is appealing to the highest motives of those eligible and not to the lowest. It makes its stand for a just price for the labor of its members and none the less for the highest standard of work, which means the higher the standard, the higher the price. It calls to those at the top as well as to those at the bottom. The state of the professions at present is one of chaos; reconstruction and consolidation must be from the bottom upwards to the top; the process, however, requires the co-operation of all.

The union is the only body in existence to watch over the interests of the "black-coated" workers of the building industry. It should have been founded long before. Unfortunately this class of worker was so "respectable," or, more truthfully, "snobbish," that a previous attempt came to nothing. Hence a few have sought protection of their interests in organizations chiefly composed of clerical workers. The union has every respect for the latter class of workers, generally much underpaid. It denies, however, the capacity of such organizations to represent the skilled professional worker; it is as ludicrous as for a general union of unskilled laborers to represent the skilled craftsman or mechanic. One such body catering for all sorts of workers, places municipally employed architects and surveyors in the same category as school attendance officers. The others allow a small bonus on the basic wage of a clerk; in other words the designer or surveyor of buildings or parts of buildings is graded as a slightly superior clerical worker. This is not good enough for the A. S. A. P. U. Its

first national convention of delegates from all parts of the country recently instructed its executive, not only to proceed with its minimum wage proposals at present before the leading professional institutes, which proposals were unanimously approved, but to draw up a scheme of organization within the union so that the particular interests of the variously employed (i.e., according to class of employee) may best be furthered.

For the purpose of internal organization Scotland has been divided into branch areas, the members in each area to form a branch, the unit for purposes of business, voting, social and professional intercourse, etc., it being felt that all such should be adapted to the special local needs of its members. The scheme gives, as nearly as is humanly possible, the opportunity to every member to take an active part in the affairs of the

union, the large industrial centres not being favored above the rural districts.

James Gibson.

## "FIRST AMERICANS"

### FORM A LABOR UNION.

A real Americanization movement has reached fulfillment at Riverbank, Calif., where J. B. Stovall, secretary-treasurer of the local lodge of Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, has organized a lodge of the International Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen, composed entirely of Laguna and Ascomite Indians.

There were thirty charter members when the lodge was organized and many admissions since. The officers are all Indians and the business of the lodge will be transacted in the tribal language.

This is said to be the first attempt to organize the aborigines.

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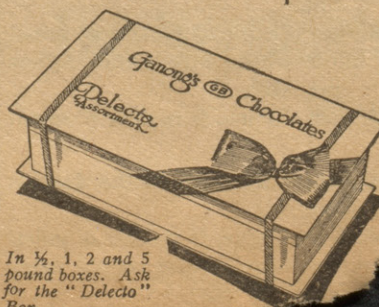
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ing of the Federation took Munsey sharply to task for repaying the loyalty of his workers with the be-

# Mothers Pensions--Their Aim and Administration

**A** PENSION is a payment for service rendered; it is a term which is not applicable to payments made to dependent mothers in civil life, unless we consider that the service rendered by the mother in bearing children justifies the payment of a pension.

In this case there is no reason why every mother should not have equal claim upon the state irrespective of the ability or willingness of the father to support his wife and family.

In some countries, maternity is temporarily endowed in the interests of the child, but that is essentially different in conception and practice from the more permanent payments which have been wrongly called Mothers' Pensions, made to a mother until, as her children are under working age.

It is of the utmost importance that the mother herself who is to benefit by these payments should recognize the difference between a pension and a salary or allowance.

The former is a payment which as a rule cannot be refused to those who qualify in respects which have no bearing on their future behavior; the latter is a payment which is only made to mothers who are "fit" (I use the language of the Ontario Act) to perform certain services, the performance of which has a very direct relations to their future behavior.

From this we shall understand how important it is that the mother should have a right conception of the intent of the legislation.

The intent or aim of the allowance is based on certain principles or facts, some general and some particular in character.

We say in the first place that the future of our nation depends in large measure on the children of each successive generation; "the children of to-day are the fathers of to-morrow," "the race marches forward on the feet of little children," nice phrases which come glibly from the tongues of professors and professional philanthropists, sentiments which are always met with cheers and clappings from wealthy audiences, but sentiments which are poor bed-fellows for such as "Business is business," "the survival of the fittest," and "each man is Master of his own fate."

Federal Government it is true, we  
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Babylon, Rome, and St. Petersburg  
repeats itself.

It is, then, the knowledge that the future of our Dominion depends on the care of the children of to-day which has given us such legislation.

But there are other ways in which children can be cared for and have been cared for. In 1800, the French Minister of the Interior reported to Napoleon that there were 63,000 children in Foundling Asylums in France, and that they died like flies in these institutions. What did Napoleon do? He saw in these boys and girls potential armies of fighters and workers. I doubt not that it was more his militarism than his humanitarianism which prompted his famous decree of 1811 which sent these children up to the age of 12 to the farmers' families of France, and which caused him to appropriate 5 million francs a year for payments to these farmer foster-parents.

But though his motive was different perhaps, the reason for his action was the same as ours; he knew that the family home reared healthier and more capable children than the best institution the Nuns and Sisters of Paris could devise.

Our action, then, is based on our belief in the family as the unit of society which in spite of all its limitations and its failings, is better than any artificial grouping which society has offered in its place.

But we have gone further than that. The English Poor Law Authorities in 1868, recognized this principle and boarded out the children of one mother in another mother's home; we have omitted this stage in Canadian history in the case of dependent mothers who are considered "fit" to bring up their children, and we are boarding them out in their mothers' homes instead.

For we believe that the ideal unit of society is that in which parents and children of mixed ages and sexes live together bound together by the ties of blood relationship, a relationship so knitting the mother to the child that it prompted Kipling to write:

"If I were hanged on the highest  
hill,  
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!  
I know whose love would follow  
me still,  
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!

If I were drowned in the deepest  
sea.  
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!  
I know whose tears would come  
can be down to me,  
and policy. Me, O mother o' mine!  
(Signed) G.

If I were damned of body and soul,  
I know whose prayers would make  
me whole,  
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!

These, then, may be considered the general principles and may be summed up by saying that we, in this particular social problem, have recognized the importance of the child to the future of the nation and the importance of the family as the basic social unit.

In so far as private or public agencies have in the past given outdoor relief to dependent families it may be said that they have in the past recognized these principles.

Is the difference between relief from a public or private agency different from the allowance we pay by cheque month by month merely a difference in form and perhaps amount tending to **vary from a minimum** amount of material relief in kind without any intelligent service accompanying it, as found in outdoor relief at its worst to a fully adequate monthly cheque with the highest type of service as found in Mothers' Allowances at their best?

Is it merely a difference which "right" to relief and in the second case, they have a "right" to an allowance?

In actual fact, wherever out-door relief is administered by a public department, as for instance in Winnipeg, or where private agencies are subsidized by public funds, as in Calgary, there is as much "right" in the one case as in the other.

The difference must be something more than that. In actual fact, I suspect that we have everywhere felt that allowances were necessary as state payments because private agencies had not sufficient funds and municipal bodies had not the will to give cash allowances.

If we have merely shifted the responsibility from one shoulder to another or if having drained one source of relief we have decided to tap another and larger one, we have accomplished nothing good and may have paved the way to doing much harm. The history of the English Poor Law has taught us how easy it is to sap the roots of independence by offering the barest necessities of existence in an English Work House as the right of all people.

I prefer to think that we have removed the problem of certain types of dependent families from public and private relief agencies to Mothers' Allowance Commissions, because we recognize certain principles and aims:

1. That the normal development of the children in the family requires that the family life shall be as near normal in every respect as possible, that the mother and the

children shall have all the responsibility of buying, spending and saving, and later, as the children one by one grow older, of earning as exist in other families.

2. That the status of allowance families in the community shall be, in course of time, the same as that of any other family drawing its salary from the government of the province, and shall not be the status of a "family under relief" with the stigma which however much we may wish the contrary, has and always will attach to the family cared for by relief agencies.

3. That we believe that poverty, inadequately cared for, perpetuates itself from one generation to another and that we hope that the service attached to our payments of adequate allowances will prevent the occurrence of poverty in the families of the second generation except in so far as poverty may be caused by their own abuse or misuse of the opportunities fortune gives them.

The normal life which we desire depends upon the ability of the parents or parent to satisfy certain needs: 1. The material needs (adequacy of food, shelter and clothing); 2. The human needs which develop intellect and character. Of the first, let us say that adequacy of allowance alone is not sufficient—the mother must have the knowledge and the will to make proper use of the allowance. Of the second, let us say that an allowance which is only adequate when supplemented by the additional earnings of the mother, as is so often the case in the United States, may deprive the mother of the leisure, the strength, and the freedom from anxiety which are three essential **factors** in rendering her able to satisfy the human needs, and even the material needs of her children.

The absent mother, the tired mother, the anxious mother cannot "play" with her children. Play is the work of the child, for years its entire education comes through play and for years after adolescence, play and the use of spare time is a potent factor in the development of character.

The mother must be able and free to play with or guide the play of her children.

Five Provinces in Canada have passed Mothers' Allowance Acts; officials are at work who are charged with the responsibility of deciding whether a mother is "fit" to receive an allowance.

No investigation of a cursory nature will decide the fitness of a mother.

If we conceive her duty to be that of maintaining a normal standard of life for her children, and if we agree with Dr. Devine that normal-



Furthermore, the mother, who, as the wife of a ne'er-do-well husband of uncertain income and intemperate habits may have failed in her duties to her children, may under the friendly care of a visitor and in receipt of a regular allowance show herself fully capable of and willing to maintain a high standard of family life for the same children—as his widow. We must rely on the neighborhood sources of information to decide whether to try a mother in her new position.

Investigation of the mother's fitness was resented in 1916, in Manitoba by a representative of organized labor, who had but recently congratulated the writer on helping to secure the passage of the Mothers' Allowance Act.

I met his criticisms with a question: "Do you believe a Civil Service Reform?"

"Yes," he said.

"You believe that a Civil servant should give reasonable evidence of fitness for the particular service he seeks to perform and for which he expects a salary from the Government?"

"Yes," he said, "I do."

"And you believe that if after appointment he does not make good he should be discharged?"

"Yes," he said.

"And you will agree with me that a reasonable degree of supervision of his work will be necessary if the Government is to know whether he is making good or not?"

"Yes," he said.

"I think," I said, "you approved of our calling these mothers who are to benefit by the act, 'the new civil servants.'"

"Y-e-s," he said, rather hesitatingly.

"Well then, you didn't really mean what you said just now about abolishing all investigation and supervision just because we have taken these mothers away from the municipal relief systems?"

He smiled, and from that time on, I had no more complaints from that quarter.

Inasmuch, then, as for one reason or another, it is impossible for us to decide definitely as to the fitness or otherwise of a mother for an allowance, I suggest that the Government ought in practice to engage these mothers on probation for a period of six months. At the end of that time it should be possible to decide by examining carefully certain criteria whether she has proved herself "fit" for her position; such criteria as:

The health of the children.

The attendance of the children at school.

The progress at school.

Their behaviour in and around their home.

Their tidiness and the tidiness of the home.

their attitude to the mother.

One would like to see some simple way attached to the placing of a mother after six months on the permanent staff of the government.

Lastly, in connection with the original investigation, I would urge that certain essential facts, such as ages, proof of marriage, death, etc., should be required of applicants as a matter of form; just as they are required under certain circumstances in other phases of life.

The actual contact between investigators and applicants should not make the latter look upon the former as inquisitors into their private affairs. The mothers should rather look upon the social workers responsible for the investigation as people who are employed to instruct them as to the nature of and conditions of their new employment.

If the mother's standards of mothercraft have been in the past inferior to the standards adopted by the Commission, then the social worker must explain the difference and win her to the belief in the desirability of the higher standard. This must be done at the outset, not after the allowance has been paid for several months, when it has been found that the children go to school when they please and to the movies when they don't please.

Mothers' Allowances must be adequate to enable the mother and her children to live a full life. The amount of each allowance will vary according to the number and ages of the children, the locality in which the mother lives and the sources of income over and above the allowance.

If the allowances are adequate, a problem at once confronts those responsible for the administration. This problem is suggested by the question: Is the State justified in maintaining families through government allowances at a higher standard of living than is possible for the unskilled laborer's family which lives perhaps next door?

In England, in 1836, two years after the reform of the Poor Law which resulted in the establishment of separate workhouse schools for workhouse children with instruction at the hands of more or less qualified teachers, the Bedford Board of Guardians appealed against the order from the Local Government Board by which the Guardians were compelled to teach the Poor Law children to read and write. They asked that they be allowed to teach their children reading only, saying that the Poor Law School children educated at the expense of the rate payers were going out into the world better equipped to compete for a living than the common laborer's child who learned nothing. The Local Government Board refused the request; compulsory education of all children followed not very long after.

If we, in Canada, can prove that a certain social result with children can be obtained by paying a certain salary to dependent mothers, shall we not then, through unemployment insurance, sickness insur-

ance, adjustment of the use of public and private capital and in other ways, endeavor to make it possible for all independent workers who are willing to work to secure an income which will be sufficient in size and regular enough to secure the same social result? Therefore, without hesitation, I say let us decide on the minimum amount necessary to maintain an adequate standard of life for a family of a given size and age, and give that amount whether it be \$50 a month or \$200 a month, even though it be in excess of the income of her neighbor, the independent laborer.

In conclusion, at the risk of criticism, I suggest that perhaps we are plunging too rapidly into enormous expenditures of public money without being quite sure that the expected results are being achieved, and of even more importance, without utilizing the experiences of this type of dependency to strike death blows at the causes of unnecessary and preventable deaths of the men who should be wage earners.

We ought to know in every Province exactly why such a man died and whether a wrong social or economic condition was in whole or in part the cause of his death.

I have a suspicion that tuberculosis and industrial accidents as causes would be high up on the list. The governments which will spend a half a million dollars a year on Mothers' Allowances and refuse to spend a tenth of that sum on anti-

tuberculosis propaganda, housing reform and factory inspection are going to over-burden their citizens with taxation, and reduce the number who are able to pay those taxes, for it must not be forgotten that not only is the dependent mother not a producer of wealth, but she is also a consumer of wealth.

Five years is a short time in the history of the Dominion. If the five Provinces granting allowances at the present time would standardize their work, limit its operation and study the effects in comparison with other groups, say an equal number of independent workmen's families, and of working widows families, and of families in receipt of ordinary outdoor relief, for a period of five years, then they might have accurate data on which to justify their extension of the principle to all mothers and children who through no fault of their own were unable to maintain an adequate standard of living.

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# The Open Shop Crusade

This article on "The Open Shop Crusade," taken from the New Republic, New York, largely follows, but in much greater detail, the views stated in an editorial in the Railroader last week. Most trade unionists will agree with the article in the main, though there may be some difference of opinion on the references made to the Plumb Plan and to responsibility for production:—

IN Chicago, at a business men's convention, one of the speakers assures his colleagues that "in a little while the union labor man will be eating out of his employer's hand." In New York a semi-public employment service reports that while jobs were plentiful two months ago, "now we are lucky if we place one-fifth of those who are seeking work." In Detroit, Philadelphia, Cleveland, every other industrial center in the country, organized men are excitedly whipping together a sort of defence against an expected assault by capital. Every wind indicates that a new group of dissatisfied employers, taking advantage of a momentary unprofitable to suspend production rather than dump goods on a falling market, are preparing to launch against union labor perhaps the greatest offensive of the last dozen years.

Locally, in this struggle which seems to be impending, the issues may be varied and complex. Nationally, one issue will overshadow all the others. Away with the autocracy of labor! will be the battle-cry. Give us the Open Shop! Already this cry is raised. In a statement that has rallied all those employers who want "a show-down," the chairman of the Republican Publicity Association in Washington brands the closed shop as "exclusive, monopolistic and domineering." It is "rule or ruin." It destroys "the independence of the individual," spells disaster for production, transcends, in short, "anything dreamed of by rapacious monarchs."

## A Paper Menace.

If an attack upon the unions is in fact impending, it will be the most natural thing in the world for employers to dub it a crusade for the open shop. That battle-cry will be used again, just as it has so often been used in the past, because it is the most effective anti-union weapon. It can be so phrased as to appeal to something Americans have been taught to esteem, though not always able to attain: freedom of choice for the individual man and woman. Why should any man be obliged to "join a union" for the privilege of working where he chooses? What is the Federal Government's role in this?

What is the Federal Government's role in this? one autocrat to do the utmost of anything with the government. Had the government been obliged to do the utmost of anything, it would have been obliged to do the utmost of anything.

banish an autocracy that actually exists, it is worth while to run the risk of substituting an autocracy that is still largely theoretical. Moreover, argue these leaders, the risk is never great: since the trade union, unlike the factory, is capable of control by popular referendum of its personnel. From this starting-point the argument branches off in a hundred different ways. Turn from that argument for the moment: how integral a part of labor's fighting programme has the demand for a closed shop ever been? If "the menace of the closed shop" is much more than a paper menace, a bogey to be raised at a convenient moment, then the record of industrial conflict in American will show that foremost among the causes of great strikes has been the demand of labor for the closed shop.

## Examine the Record.

As a matter of fact the record shows nothing of the sort. The history of conflict between the union and the modern "trust" dates, perhaps, from Homestead (1892). Was the closed shop the issue of the Homestead strike? No. Carnegie Brothers and Company simply warned the unions that if they did not accept its wage scale then Carnegie Brothers and Company would proceed to deal with its employers as individuals. Preservation of the union was the definite issue upon which the strike began. It lasted five months; ended with the unions defeated and the strong-arm tactics of the employer justified.

Three other great strikes marked that troublesome year, and in none of them did the issue of the open shop figure any more substantially. The miners' strike in the Coeur d'Alene district of Idaho, still the most spectacular of all industrial struggles in America, was a strike against periodic wage reductions. The switchmen's strike in Buffalo aimed at a ten-hour day. The coal-miners of Tennessee struck in protest against the competitive use of convict labor.

Of four great strikes in 1892, strikes still fresh in the memory of employers and of labor, not one was for the closing of a shop. A threat against the life of one union, periodic wage reductions for another, a workday of more than ten hours, the use of convict labor—these were the causes, none to creditable to capital, which provoked strikes that tied up industry for many months.

## Against Cut in Wages.

Through the history of industrial conflict in the years which have passed, the policy has been the same. (Signed) G.

The Mine Workers' strike of 1902 was directed not towards a closed shop but against a further cut in wages. The Pullman strike of 1894, which led to the arrest of Eugene Debs and other leaders, and to the calling out of federal troops by President Cleveland, was a strike for the restoration of wages that had been paid the previous year.

Where was the closed shop issue at Lowell or at Paterson, or in that anthracite coal strike which brought President Roosevelt into the controversy? Long hours, attempts to reduce wages, attempts to destroy every vestige of union labor power—these, and not the issue of the closed shop, have been the most fruitful causes of industrial warfare in America. We have, in the last year or two, had threats of strikes on the part of the railway workers. Never has the closed shop been the issue. In one instance it was hours; in another, wages. We have had a strike of coal-miners. The issue, again, was hours and wages. We have had a steel strike, four months of misery for many thousands of men and women; nowhere among the demands of the strikers was there an ultimatum for the closed shop. It was, in fact, for an open shop, in the sense that union men might work alongside non-union men in blast-furnaces and rolling-mills, that so many workmen downed their tools and fought the most powerful trust of modern times.

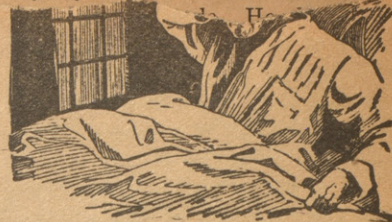
## The Real Factors.

In short, those employers who attempt habitually to focus the attention of the public on the issue of the open shop, and upon that issue to the exclusion of every other, are neglecting in their enthusiasm those very factors which have steadily been the cause of trouble in the past. It is not hard to see why this should be the case. Workdays that run to twelve hours; shifts that sometimes keep a man on duty eighteen hours at a stretch; wages that do not match the government's own figures for an income necessary to maintain a decent standard of living; a policy of discharging able workmen simply because they are members of a union, and of keeping them out of future jobs by virtue of the "black-list"—these are factors productive of industrial warfare, but factors which the reactionary employer cannot easily justify in the public's eyes. Result: to shift the issue, to conceal his real fears and hopes, the reactionary employer dwells upon the closed shop and the peril it will bring.

## Merely Smoke-Screen.

The issue of the open shop, nine times out of ten, is a smoke-screen behind which the reactionary employer can mass his guns for a totally different sort of attack. That is the first fact to be remembered as we approach the conflict which is threatening to-day. And the second fact is that responsibility for the struggle, if the struggle comes, rests on the side of capital.

ing of the Federation took Munsey sharply to task for repaying the loyalty of his workers with the be-



## Could Not Sleep

Mr. Earnest Clark, Police Officer, 338 King St., Kingston, Ont., writes:

"For three years I suffered from nervousness and sleeplessness. I believe my condition was brought about by overwork. I had frequent headaches, neuralgic pains and twitching of nerves and muscles. I had indigestion, was short of breath and easily tired. I commenced a treatment of Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, and seven boxes of this medicine cured me of all my symptoms. I am now feeling one hundred per cent. better than I was, and have to thank Dr. Chase's Nerve Food for the good health I am now enjoying."

Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, 50 cents a box, 6 for \$2.75, all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Ltd., Toronto.



Consider the situation. A combination of special circumstances has indeed produced in many of our larger cities a closed shop in the building trades—and the same set of special circumstances, we believe, rather than the fact of the closed shop itself, has turned those building trades into a disgrace to organized labor; but in no other industry has the closed shop gone equally far, or followed the same set of ethics. The railway brotherhoods, with power to fight for a closed shop, have preferred the open shop, trusting to the good sense of non-union workmen to join the brotherhood once they witness what it can accomplish for its members. That is generally the case wherever union labor is established. Is there one instance to-day, in the whole country, of a single important union, threatening to strike for the closing of a shop?

Labor is nowhere taking the offensive. That fact, perhaps, seems too obvious to-day to be worth recording. But later on, if the battle is begun, the powerful engines of the press will be brought into service to prove the whole war was willed by union labor.



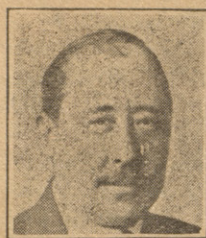
## OUR LONDON LETTER

## Lights on Convention of International Federation of Trade Unions

London, November 26.

THE most important event of the week from the Labor standpoint has been the meeting in London of the International Federation of Trade Unions.

A hundred delegates assembled, representing 18 countries, and 24,000,000 organized workers. It was



Ethelbert Pogson

a remarkable event to have German and Austrian trade union leaders sitting beside those from Belgium, France, Italy, as well as the representatives of Canada and Britain.

The first thing that happened was somewhat in the nature of a bomb-shell. Mr. W. A. Appleton, the Federation President, resigned. Now Appleton, although not wielding any conspicuous power in this country—he is secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions, which should not be confounded with the more powerful Trade Union Congress—has a considerable European reputation and the breach is of real importance on that account.

It was not without significance that Appleton first notified his intention to resign to Mr. Sam. Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor. The United States is standing out of this conference on account of the advanced attitude of some of its prominent men. Appleton is Gompers' close friend and has an admiration for him akin to hero-worship. Those who know this are not in the least surprised to find them standing together.

## Why He Resigned.

The reason Appleton gave is this: "Had it been decreed that my election to the presidency of the International Federation involved my acceptance of Socialism or any other political 'ism,' I should most emphatically have refused nomination. I stand as a trade unionist, not as a politician, and by a trade unionist I mean one who has asserted and practised his right to combine with his fellows for the purpose of selling his labor at the best possible price.

"My resignation does not mean that I have lost interest in the poor or the down-trodden of any country, but it does mean that I shall resume my personal freedom to work in my own way and without having to bend my efforts to the promulgation of theories that appear to me to be out of date and fundamentally impracticable, nor shall I be involved in the advertisement of any particular school of politics.

"I shall be free to preach peace within the nations as well as peace

between the nations; to consider reconstruction problems scientifically, and to devote a greater portion of my time to studying and helping to combat the serious industrial conditions which threaten my own countrymen."

It may be explained that Appleton has for some time been condemning direct action for political purposes and other "extreme" tenets of certain sections, and has been condemning Bolshevism and those over here who coquette with it without stint. As result he has made not a few declared enemies, though not among the more reputable element, and was himself severely trounced at the last British Trade Union Congress.

## Mr. Thomas as President.

The railwaymen's leader, Mr. J. H. Thomas, was unanimously chosen as the new president and he put the British position in a nutshell. "We are," he said "looked upon as yellow trade unionists but we desire a world free, we want liberty and justice for our class, and we want to remove all the ills from which our class suffer, not by a bloody upheaval, but by the scientific application of our minds to those problems.

"That is the only difference between ourselves and those who have attacked us."

Even the German delegate, Grassman, did not favor communism which he described as "the worst form of reaction," and there was a good deal of criticism of the Russians on the ground that all approaches had been replied to by attacks. "It is now for the Russians," declare Edo Fimmen (Holland), "to come to us, for we cannot indefinitely run after them."

The main discussion terminated in a wordy, if weighty, resolution which protested against all open and covert attempts of the dominant class throughout the world to suppress freedom of organization and action by the workers; it raised emphatic protest against the military and commercial war still carried on against Russia; declared that it is the primary duty of all national trade union centres and of all workers to use every means to fight the world reaction which threatens the growth, existence and very life of the trade union movement.

The opinion was voiced that, both nationally and internationally, the movement, besides systematic pursuit for better conditions of labor, must join issue against capitalism and imperialism; that militarism must be combated in every form, and, "The trade union movement of all countries should resort to general national boycott as a stern and effectual weapon in the fight against reaction and for progress."

An urgent appeal was made for co-operation "to

working classes the necessity for international mass action in the assault on reaction, in declaring war against war, and for the realization of a new social system."

Canada, Italy and Norway voted against but the resolution was carried by 21,906,000 votes to 2,710,000.

## Unemployed Demonstrations.

In London the unemployed continue to have processions and demonstrations and to form committees, but very little of real value is being done. The Government in discussing it in its charming desultory way states it has a scheme for arterial roads, which cannot with the greatest speed be ready before next year, while hundreds of thousands of men, chiefly ex-soldiers and sailors, are without work.

The Camberwell district, which has 7,000 out of works, has seen the commandeering of a couple of houses by the unemployed, and from these they carry on their operations. In Islington, on the other side of the metropolis, the men have taken possession of a room in the library for headquarters.

a drama in these things, but much practical good. Delightful figures are issued from time to time by Government departments to prove that the percentage of unemployed is less than at some stated period before the war, but it is going to be a hard winter for many thousands of people.

It is part of the irony of things that the chief industrial controversy just now should be as to whether women and young persons should be employed in factories on the two-shift system. The Lancashire cotton lords plead that unless they can get more labor time out of their machinery they cannot make both ends meet, but the workers are more than a little suspicious of the proposal. Mr. Henry Boothman, general secretary of the operative spinners, says flatly that if the proposed bill passes it will not be worked. The male workers in the industry do not want their wives and daughters to go back to the bad old system of starting in the mill at 6 a.m. and the women's organizations are equally emphatically against.

Strikes are comparatively few and of relatively small moment, but there is more than a likelihood of fresh trouble in Manchester, where the tramwaymen are demanding a \$5 per week advance. The tramway committee which, only a few months ago, was forced to concede a \$2.50 increase, is not likely to grant this without putting up a fight.

Ethelbert Pogson

You never can tell. Many a low forms a deep sea, and many a shallow girl a true woman.

ance. The public has accepted the principles of trade unionism. No doubt the public's response would be heartier had the leaders of union labor shown more interest in that factor with the public is most interested in. This factor is production. And while the old-line chieftains of the American Federation of Labor have regularly declared themselves interested in production, they have never proposed labor's willingness to undertake part responsibility for it. They have, in fact, done their best to beat down proposals like the Plumb Plan which aimed at just that responsibility on labor's part.

Organized capital would, of course, have fought bitterly against such a change in labor's status; but by broadening the base of their pyramid so as to represent in larger measure the interests of the unorganized public as well as the organized workers, trade union leaders would have entrenched themselves more strongly for the battle which they face to-day.

## Assault on Unionism.

Those employers who want to "go to the mat with labor" are in an odd position. After inveighing against labor for more than two years for its failure to increase production, here they are — now proposing to cut down production not because the world has less need of goods but because they want to safeguard prices. Meantime many of these employers are preparing to don armor and uphold the "open shop." What they really mean — had they the courage to say it — is that they are preparing for an assault upon trade unionism. It will be a misfortune if they succeed in breaking union strength. Trade unionism is a necessary safeguard against exploitation, the one adequate means of organizing a supply of labor. When the unions have the privilege of coming into any industry on a preferential basis (i.e., neither a "closed shop" nor a "non-union shop"), and when these unions are open to any working man or woman who wishes to enlist, a promise is established for the growth democratic power. But when that promise has been challenged, when the reactionary employers of the country seek a chance to crush the unions, then the fight becomes the public's fight as well as the cause of union labor.

## Horse Radish

Young Lady (on first visit to Western ranch): "For what purpose do you use that coil of line on your saddle?"

Cowpuncher: "That line, as you call it, lady, we use for catching cattle and horses."

Young Lady: "Oh, indeed. Now may I ask, what do you use for bait?"—Los Angeles Times.



the man died. Now if the details of this case in brief form could be brought to the knowledge of other men liable to be similarly injured it would undoubtedly tend to the saving of lives and the prevention of physical and mental suffering, and so with other cases of preventable death or injury.

of accidents to the lowest possible minimum and the conservation to the highest possible maximum of life and limb amongst railroad employees—the averting from the railroad man's home and family of the heartbreaking bereavement resulting from his death or the misery to all concerned arising from his serious personal injury. To accomplish this purpose employees should co-operate earnestly and unstintingly with the work of the company's safety organization.

With a view to picking up, correlating and co-ordinating the safety efforts of the various railroad managements being put forth by their respective safety organizations, a meeting including twenty-four railroad safety officers, the editors of the official publications of the O. R. C., the B. of L. F. and E. and the B. of R. T. was held in Chicago on September 25th.

In a letter dated October 13 directed to all railroad safety officers Isaiah Hale, Safety Superintendent of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company, states that one of the objects of this meeting was to determine in what way and to what extent the railroad safety departments might be of service in co-operating with the said editors and the Editor of the Journal of the Switchmen's Union of North America, who is also in accord with the movement, in maintaining a safety department in their respective magazines the better to permit of their keeping constantly before the minds of their readers the importance of safety in railroad operation. To make such department as "interesting and practical as possible" Mr. Hale has requested the safety officers to mail each month to these editors a statement setting forth brief but exact details of avoidable injuries to employees on their respective properties without mentioning the name of the employee or State wherein employed, the publication of which may keep other men from the consequences of similar accidents. Mr. Hale suggests "Any little heart story featuring safety or the lack of it." Amongst instances of this kind cited during the course of the meeting was one wherein a section man got one of his fingers injured under conditions that were calculated to develop septi-cemia, or blood poisoning. His fellow workers urged him to see a doctor and have the wound dressed, but he insisted that it would be all right in a few days and he would not bother going to the doctor with it. Had he done so the physician in treating the wound would have applied iodine or some other antiseptic, thus preventing infection. But what really can be done is that blood poisoning policy. (Signed) G. J. ... less than three weeks

It was proposed at the meeting, and the proposition met general approval, that occurrences of this kind should be reported to a central medium and there assembled and sent out to the various employees' organization journals, and that each such occurrence would carry its own lesson by which all readers would be warned in all such cases to take the proper safety precautions against dangerous results. However, until such central medium is designated Mr. Hale has requested the safety officers to send direct to the editors such matters as they may have available.

The editors of these publications feel that it is an imperative duty they owe the men of their respective organizations to co-operate in this work. Hence matter of this kind as will, when given publicity, prove helpful in conserving life and limb amongst railroad employees will be given space in our columns. The first contributions of this kind we have received to date appear in part elsewhere in this issue.

Any attempt at propaganda other than real bona fide safety propaganda on the part of the safety departments of the railroads, however, is sure to militate against, if not defeat, the primary purpose of the existence of such departments, for it will create suspicion as to the sincerity of such purpose.

We would urge that all safety meetings of any and every kind whatsoever be kept free from ulterior efforts of this kind—that such dissembling be excluded absolutely from the safety movement in its every phase, for where it is introduced, no matter how indirectly or adroitly, it will be sure to shake the confidence of the employees therein.

If successful co-operation with the employees is to be maintained then the safety departments of the

ing of the Federation took Munsey sharply to task for repaying the loyalty of his workers with the betrayal of this time because of what we regard as an enormous psychology in the premises on the part of some safety officers. Thus, for instance, from such an officer — a man who is active in the general Safety First campaign, of whose sincerity there is in our mind absolutely no question, whose earnest zeal in the cause we believe to be inspired by none but the highest, most genuine, bonafide Safety First motives — we recently received a "paper" on Safety

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giving it publication we found it to be largely a lecture to employees on deportment.

It is replete with scriptural quotations and suggestions bearing on same, which, of course, are absolutely all right in their place, but have little connection with the physically safe operation of railroads. The thought is injected of the sublimity of the sight of a long freight train rounding a sharp curve going down grade and just one man — the engineer — controlling it with the atmosphere we breathe. The grouchy conductor is pictured, the engineer criticized for putting oil on his engine at every stop, and all in all from the view point of the man eager to inspire the fullest co-operation between the employees and the company's safety organizations the paper has practically no value at all.

An engine, the number of which is given, is described as a bad steamer, causing delay to other trains as well as her own, and in one instance actually having to give her train up. On one night, so the paper reads, when a conductor asked for right over the train this engine was hauling, the dispatcher assured him she wouldn't lay him out that night because a certain engineer was running her, and sure enough, so says the paper, the said engine was "right on the dot." Further observation of that engineer, the paper informs us, disclosed the fact that he "loves to talk to his engine and listen to her purr"—that he is always happy in his work and invariably has good trips, and if anything goes wrong he doesn't get profane, but is pleasant and makes the best of it, and the contention clearly is that with an engineer of such personality operating a locomotive mechanical defects that affect steaming, etc., count for nothing. The paper contains this declaration, "Treat an engine well and she will readily respond; let her know you are afraid of her and she will make life miserable for you."

There is a gleam of enthusiastic optimism throughout the paper suggestive of the idea that railroading is one sweet dream and the men engaged in it can be oh, so sublimely happy—that, in fact, they are a privileged class to be permitted opportunities that afford such terrestrial felicity.

The paper has much of the allegorical and sentimental and leans heavily on psychological impossibilities for the support of its contentions. It contains but little of the practical thoughts that suggest physical safety and it winds up with a paragraph in which is expressed a longing to see the employees and the officials on the author's road "organized into one real fraternal brotherhood." The paper, in fact, is mainly a lecture to the employees in which they are admonished to be right thinking and cheerful and good so that they can thus get over the

hand by sheer force of a sunny, optimistic, tolerant mental attitude. Non-steaming, leaky or defective drafter engines operate with efficiency and alacrity. But it is so lacking in real safety inspiration that we cannot give it publication as a safety document, even in part, and we beg to notify all safety officers that it is useless to send us matter of this kind for publication in the interest of safety.

Other contributions, however, received from safety officers possessing value from the common sense, plain, practical safety viewpoint, we are glad to publish.

We would respectfully suggest to the safety departments of the various railroads that the less extraneous propaganda that is mixed up with their safety efforts the more successful will such efforts be—particularly in the matter of inspiring the employees with the honesty and sincerity of their motives. Nothing that we say herein is intended as a criticism but as frank, honest matter-of-fact advice actuated by an earnest desire for Safety First co-operation between the employees and the safety departments of the railroads along the most practical, the most effective, the best result-getting lines.

Should the employees find anything in the safety departments of the various railroads which they feel merits criticism we will be very pleased to publish their views in the premises without revealing their names, as our purpose is to utilize all that is useful and meritorious in the safety organizations of the different railroads in promoting the physical safety of the men engaged in train service, and insofar as the influence of the magazine extends of all other railroad employees as well.

#### BETHLEHEM STEEL FAVORS OPEN SHOP

The Bethlehem Steel Corporation will refuse to sell fabricated steel to builders and contractors in the New York and Philadelphia districts to be erected on a union shop basis.

This policy was disclosed by Eugene G. Grace, president of the corporation, who testified on Dec. 15, before the joint legislative committee investigating the alleged "building trust," replying to charges that his concern was sponsoring the "open shop" movement by withholding steel from builders employing union men.

"I think it is a proper thing to protect the open shop principle," declared Mr. Grace, who explained that his stand would not be changed even if building operations in New York were to be suspended because steel could not be obtained by union erectors.

Whether the corporation will extend its policy to other parts of the United States, the witness said, depends "entirely on what effect I should expect it to have on our general labor situation."

The steel magnate, who was on the witness stand nearly an hour, was subjected to a severe grilling by

Samuel Untermyer, the committee's counsel, who has stated that he is the largest stockholder in the Bethlehem corporation.

Charging Mr. Grace with "fencing" and evading his questions, Mr.

Untermyer several times during the examination appealed to Senator Carson, acting chairman of the committee, to order the witness to answer his questions.

#### PUTTING IT ANOTHER WAY.

At the Commercial Travellers' banquet in Montreal on Monday evening of this week, Hon. J. D. Reid, Minister of Railways and Canals, and Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, Leader of the Opposition, were amongst the speakers.

At one point in his speech Hon. Dr. Reid spoke briefly of the nationalization of railways, and expressed a fear that the National Railways would not show the same surpluses as the Canadian Pacific, and the position might be difficult until matters got back to normal.

The Leader of the Opposition in his remarks said: "Dr. Reid regretted that the surplus of the Canadian National Railways was not equal to that of the Canadian Pacific, but let us thank God there was no deficit on the C. P. R. equal to that of the C. N. R."

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December 25, 1920

# The Canadian Railroader

WEEKLY

The Official Organ of

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## Consider the "Open Shop"

THERE is alarm in some Canadian unions that the "open shop" drive in the United States will be transferred to Canada. Suspicious local circumstances are pointed to, and the alarm has already had the effect of drawing kindred trades more closely together than they have ever been. Many unionists will consider that the effect is welcome, whatever they may think of the cause.

A condition with some unions has been that when they got into a strong position, they have as organized bodies become somewhat indifferent to their weaker brethren. They do make more or less of an effort to meet the claims of brotherhood, but an all-round, firm, definite alliance is wanting. In periods of real distress no doubt they would draw from their treasuries to help. Yet that continuous spirit of co-operation and support which is not measured in terms of money, is weak.

An ingenious argument for this state is that the stronger unions had to fight unaided for many years to get to their present position, that it is hardly fair to pull them, perhaps, through the furnace again merely to protect others from what they themselves have suffered, and that, in any case, no union is worth its salt that cannot produce enough fighters and martyrs of its own.

The general argument against it is that brotherhood is brotherhood, that anything which stands in its way is unbrotherly, and that nothing should be allowed to stand in its way.

Getting down to concrete cases, however, it is often found difficult to take sides on arguments such as these. Economic and other factors enter in, and there are criss-crossings of fact and opinion that cannot clearly be lined up on one side or another. What appears at first look to be a simple question of ethics is really a highly-involved subject that no sweeping declaration can cover in any one direction. Some of the wisest heads in the union movement steer a cautious course through it.

However, there occasionally comes a point where interests vision of red unions, the strong and the weak, and the middling Federal Government is to emerge from outward rather than inward time to do the utmost the barriers of sectionalism and up shows with the is reached when a blow is aimed at the ment. generally, and the heavier the blow did the front against it. An "open- practice a "non-union shop" cam-

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unionism. It brings about unions that many moderns the attack can be thrown extreme unionists, and would also be on the job, attackers. Their view is that the stronger the unionism the better. They hope that it will be strong enough to put a bad dent in unionism as we know it, which is also the hope of the attacking employer, but the two hopes reach out to different conclusions. The attacking employer hopes that when unionism is denied he will be able to dictate terms to Labor. The extremist hopes that when unionism is denied he can step in to take leadership of the maddened and disorganized masses of unionists, swinging them behind his own plan of campaign, which is to make short shrift of the present system of society, beginning, ironically enough, with the employers whose campaign he first gave his best wishes to. The extremist's hope is the more accurately-reasoned of the two.

The alarm referred to amongst some Canadian trade unions is based on this very theory. It is not fear of a dent in unionism of itself (bad enough, to be sure); it is not fear of a revival of autocracy in industry (which is only a suicidal notion some employers may have); it is fear of an ensuing chaos which would doubtless take its revenge on the would-be autocrats (and serve 'em right), but which would also be likely to spell disaster to the workers themselves and the community at large.

Up to a certain stage, attack strengthens unionism. Past a certain stage, it weakens it and rears something infinitely worse in its place. Trade unionism at the present time is a balance-wheel between the extremists at the top and the extremists at the bottom, and he who puts it out of kilter does so at his peril.

Personally (I give the personal opinion just for what it is worth), I doubt if the alarm about the "open-shop" is justified in Canada. Canadian employers generally are not as far back in the Middle Ages as American employers, in relation to the workers. There is, after all, more real liberty, more tolerance, more genuine democracy, and less spasmodic effervescence, in Canada than across the border. Canadians would not permit an octopus like the Steel Trust, or the system which allows employers to hire private armies of gunmen and control municipal and state officials for unscrupulous private ends. The British spirit gets a lot of raps at home and abroad, but it stands up fairly well in all weathers. It usually bumbles through. It is, therefore, hard for me to conceive of anything so un-Canadian as a concerted move to destroy Canadian trade unionism either openly or under screen. Surely men thinking of such a thing, if there are such men, would be advised by their friends that this is about the last country in the world to try it on. The reaction to such a move here would be speedier than in the United States, where it will come speedily enough if the attack is maintained there.

—Kennedy Crone

## Workers' Real Interests

"IT is not wages or hours that the wage workers are interested in," once said Mr. W. B. Wilson, U. S. Secretary of Labor; "but rather they are interested in self-preservation, self-reproduction, self-respect! When employers grasp this fact and so arrange industry as to enable the wage worker to work out his self-preservation, self-reproduction, and self-respect, then the question of wages and hours will solve itself. We talk about co-operation. We all want co-operation, but co-operation will come only as employer and wage worker unite in developing means whereby both shall have and enjoy self-preservation, self-reproduction, and self-respect."

Colin McKay showed from Government statistics in last week's Railroader that the average wage earned by Montreal workers was slightly less than \$60 per month — covering all classes of wage and salary earners. A recent notice in the Montreal Gazette stated that out of 9,355 male employees over 16 years of age engaged in the manufacture of rubber goods in this country last year, only 1,529 were in possession of \$30 per week or over. The average was around \$20 per week. Other Government figures show that gold mining is the most profitable of all mining from the miners' point of view. The average wage earned in Canadian gold mines in the year of grace 1919 was around \$27 per week. On these allowances men and women are expected to develop self-preservation, self-reproduction, and self-respect. My Lords and Gentlemen—it can't be done.

It is another of those unpleasant facts that most of us dread — but facts nevertheless. It is quite impossible to preserve oneself, to reproduce oneself, and to respect oneself in these times



rs and kickers are simply  
 e of our promising young  
 (much and getting so little)  
 g denied the means of  
 and self-respect. And they  
 constitute something like 99 per cent. of the community.

"With the \$125 per month I am being paid," a married man said to me not long ago, "I can just get along and no more with the present scale of prices. It is a struggle to pay my life insurance when it comes round each year. Practically nothing can be laid aside for old age. It is the blessing of God that I have no children. I dare not have any now." He is apparently allowed self-preservation minus self-reproduction. I did not like to ask him about his self-respect. Yet the average for rubber workers last year was \$20 per week and for the gold miners \$27—and they raise families!

Still we are a wonderful people. Montreal is one of the richest cities per capita in the world. Income tax officials hint coyly at the fact that we have in our midst certain persons whose incomes are in the neighborhood of one million dollars per annum. Not many—but some. Likewise a sprinkling at half a million per annum. And a glance at the society columns of our papers almost any day in the week will reveal weddings and functions where the cost of the flowers alone would pay for many a child's entire education. And there is alarm about the falling birth rate. And the Montreal Gazette assures us that we need expect no improvement in the general situation till wages are cut down. It is all very strange and seems to raise the sinister suggestion that employers, having taken away the wherewithal to self-reproduction and self-respect, are now casting longing eyes on the self-preservation fund. One wonders if there is a breaking point and when it will be reached.

—George Daniels.

### Secrecy That Isn't

IN most trade unions there is a rule that particulars of union proceedings must not be divulged except to other members of the unions intimately concerned or to trade unionists generally. In many unions the rule is a part of the initiation pledge.

The rule has always seemed to me to be largely useless, and sometimes dangerous, as it induces a feeling of security from the wrong sort of listening ears, a security that does not exist.

News of union meetings nearly always leaks, one way or another, into the ears of the parties it would be most desirable to keep it from, if it should be kept from anyone at all. There may be a traitor in the camp. There may be a man present who means well enough but who simply must pass confidences on to someone else, or who can be easily "pumped" by an agent of any party desiring information. The whole record of a union meeting might be pieced together by an "outsider" from a series of casual and apparently disconnected remarks picked up in a shop or factory. Anyone starting out to learn what happened at any particular union meeting could learn it without much effort.

This leakage is not a peculiarity of private meetings of unions alone. It is found in connection with meetings in all walks of life. Experienced newspaper reporters know this very well.

Quite a number of labor leaders know the chances of leakage from union meetings and make it a personal rule not to say anything at them which they would regret to have repeated anywhere else. One, when he is organizing a union, specifically warns the new trade unionists not to trust to the supposed secrecy of their meetings. Another talks in meetings on the assumption that what he says will be repeated to employers who fancy they are getting a "direct line" on him. He says he gets a lot of fun out of it. For myself, having been bitten several times in greener days, I never say in meeting what I would not freely say anywhere else.

As a fact, there is practically no such thing as a secret union meeting, and it would be better to get rid of the camouflage that there is. Reason No. 1 is that there is developed a false sense of security. Reason No. 2 is that strength is not in secrecy, in any case, but in unity. Reason No. 3 is that rarely do union meetings deal with matters of such a sort, or in such a way, that they need fear the widest publicity. Reason No. 4 is that the air of secrecy arouses doubt and suspicion amongst uninformed "outsiders" generally. Reason No. 5 is that there is practically no labor news for publication except news of strikes and other disputes, giving non-unionists the erroneous impression that unions do nothing but talk of strikes. If the circumstances leading to strikes and other disputes were made public as they developed, there would be fewer strikes.

—Kennedy Crone

### A Modern Parallel

IT is a strange and paradoxical fact that the great Divine Event which is now being celebrated with mirth and joy is in reality the anniversary of a birth which exemplified the homeless and the maternity problems of ancient Judea. In obedience to the edict of an autocrat, the Holy Family were on a journey to Bethlehem, and although there must have been some hundreds of healthy men and women in the best hotels that offered, the mother who was to be accouched, was left to take her chance in a stable. Fortunately, in those days the race was hardy, and still is in certain countries where lives are lived beside nature, so that no physical harm resulted.

The fact remains that in this twentieth century there are two problems which Christian civilization has not yet solved: that of housing of the worker—of which Joseph was a type—and that of looking after the mother of the family, of which Mary was the other type. The housing legislation of the Dominion Government has been declared "a dead letter" by the local labor leaders, and they are asking the Provincial Government to begin de novo for Montreal and the Province. The year 1921 should see a serious effort to once more tackle this problem.

As far as maternal assistance goes, it must be admitted that some very strenuous efforts have been made during the current year by the child welfare societies and the Charity Organization Society to bring much-needed relief to women who have far responsibilities. The C. O. S. through its "Mothers' Branch" has done a work of which the public scarcely realized the value and benefits; but the one thing now needed to sustain the life for such women is the introduction of the "Mothers' Allowances Act" which Ontario is now operating and which the provinces in the West have also introduced. Ontario will perhaps the best test of this Act, because it has more big cities and industrial centres than the Western provinces.

The more one reads and studies the sacred history of the past, the more is one convinced that many phrases such as "no room in the inn" and "massacre of the innocents" still apply to the twentieth century.

—Caedmon.

### The Unemployed

AS things stand, it is not possible to state the precise number of unemployed from day to day, or even from week to week. Only the wildest of estimates can be made of the number of unorganized workers out of work. Closer calculation can be made in regard to organized workers who are unemployed, but even with these only a rough estimate can be made. While most individual trade unions have an exact record of their own unemployed, daily or weekly reports are not made to any central compilation office, and, indeed, a number of unions do not even make the monthly report on unemployment to the Department of Labor. In the organized trades hardest hit by unemployment some effort is made at reporting to the Trades and Councils.

The number of unemployed in Montreal is variously stated at from eight to twenty thousand persons, a variety of statement which is a hindrance to impressing the urgency of the situation. The only obvious measure of acute distress is afforded by the increase in the demand on charitable and philanthropic agencies, and it is also far from accurate, probably under-representing the actual state of distress to a considerable degree. What is needed is some way of daily or weekly registration of the unemployed, a comparatively simple matter so far as organized labor is concerned, though perhaps not so simple in relation to unorganized workers, who probably constitute the majority of the unemployed, if past experience means anything.

At present the charitable and philanthropic agencies are confronted with more than they do. Organized labor makes no pretence that it approves of charitable or philanthropic agencies as a permanent means of dealing with distress caused by unemployment, but is glad that they exist in an emergency in which they are the main forms of amelioration. Where unions have funds available for the purpose or can raise subscriptions amongst their members they generally turn these funds and subscriptions over to help the unemployed. Most unions, however, are unable to properly take care of their unemployed members during a period of general depression. No relief by the city, on the score that resources are being conserved. No money to save men from starvation! Were we not told once and over again that Montreal is a rich city which demands expenditure of money to protect its riches? Men are cold and hungry throughout the city, and the brother's keeper or



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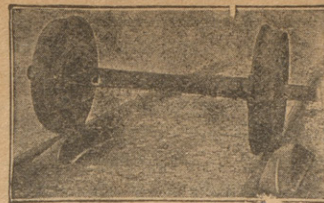
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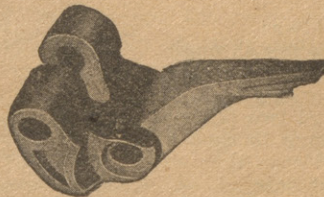
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